

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks/arguments. By the prior Amendment, all of the prior pending claims 1-64 were canceled, and new claims 65-82 were added and are now pending in the present application. By the present Amendment, claims 67, 69, 71, 72, 74, 76 and 81 are amended, as are ¶[0053] and ¶[0057] of the specification. No new matter has been added.

I. DRAWING AMENDMENTS

The Applicants have amended Figure 21 to remove the designator used for the picket illustrated therein in order to prevent possible confusion with other figures in the application. In addition, the Applicants have also amended Figure 15A to use remove the second occurrence of the designator used for the aperture illustrated therein also in order to prevent possible confusion with other figures in the application. Replacement sheets having both of these amended figures are being submitted with the present Amendment.

II. CLAIM NUMBERING

The Examiner has indicated that he has renumbered previously added claims 81 and 82 to claim numbers 80 and 81. The Applicants acknowledge this correction, and thank the Examiner for correcting this inadvertent error. Accordingly, the listing of the claims in the present Amendment reflects this correction.

III. OBJECTIONS

The Examiner has objected to the drawings for allegedly not showing all the features in

the claims, namely, that the fastener recited in claim 76 may comprise synthetic rubber. To facilitate prosecution of the present application, the Applicants have canceled that feature from claim 76. Accordingly, this objection has been overcome.

The Examiner has also objected to the specification for allegedly not providing proper antecedent basis for some of the currently claimed subject matter. Specifically, the Examiner asserts that the phrase “the first and second hemispherical portions defining a plane of symmetry at the plane of opposition” recited in claim 65, and the phrase “the ridges have a substantially triangular shape” recited in claim 74, are not supported by the specification.

With regard to claim 65, the cited phrase has been amended to recite that “the first and second hemispheroidal portions” are “symmetrical to one another about their plane of opposition.” The plane at which the first and second hemispheroidal portions oppose each other is illustrated in Figures 15A and 15B, and the symmetrical construction of the first and second hemispheroidal portions about this plane of opposition is also shown therein. In addition, paragraph [0057] of the specification has also now been amended to recite this illustrated claimed feature. Accordingly, the Applicants believe this phrase of claim 65 is fully supported in the specification, and thus that the objection to this claim has been overcome.

With regard to claim 74, the cited phrase has been amended to recite that “a profile view of the ridges has a substantially triangular shape.” As pointed out by the Examiner on page 3 of the Office Action of January 16, 2007, “the ridges on the original plug fasteners in Figures 13A and 14 show the ridges being triangular and pointing toward each other from either portion.” Based on this objection, the Applicants amended Figures 13A and 14 to illustrate that a profile of the ridges have a triangular shape, as acknowledged in that prior Office Action. In addition,

paragraph [0053] of the specification has also been amended to mention this claimed feature that is illustrated in the drawings. Accordingly, the Applicants believe this phrase of claim 74 is fully supported in the specification, and thus that the objection to this claim has also been overcome.

The Examiner has also objected to claims 65 and 69 for having informalities. In response, the Applicants have amended claims 65 and 69 in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions, and thus the objections to these claims have also been overcome.

IV. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C §112

The Examiner has rejected claim 72 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, for allegedly being indefinite. Specifically, the Examiner asserts that claim 72 fails to further limit the claimed plug fastener. In response, the Applicant have amended claim 71 (from which claim 72 depends) to affirmatively claim the "elongate fastener" as part of the plug fastener of claim 65. In addition, claim 72 has been amended to more clearly recite that it is the elongate fastener (as opposed to the plug fastener) that may comprise a screw in certain embodiments. Accordingly, the Applicants believe that the rejection of claim 72 has been overcome.

V. CONCLUSION

The Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 65-81 all recite allowable subject matter, pending the overcoming of any standing objections. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned Attorney of Record if doing so would expedite the prosecution of the present application. The Applicants note that the three-month deadline for filing a response to the pending Office Action is August 3, 2007; thus, this Amendment is timely and no fee is required. If it is determined that any fees are due, please charge Deposit Account No. 13-

0480, referencing the Attorney Docket Number specified herein.

Respectfully submitted,

/James H. Ortega/

Date: June 22, 2007

James H. Ortega, Reg. No. 50,554
BAKER & MCKENZIE LLP
2001 Ross Avenue, Suite 2300
Dallas, TX 75201
Tel: (214) 978-3058